Please cancel the previous Abstract and insert the following new Abstract.

ABSTRACT

[001] A method and system for quantifying the performance of a component adapted to function as a node in a communications network where the component is represented by a virtual distance (x) according to the following formula:

$$x = \frac{S_{i+1} - S_i}{IS}$$

where the virtual distance x is a representation of à metric that relates to intrinsic properties of the component.